

The Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park



*Scenery in the Grand Tetons, by Alfred Bierstadt
Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, MABI 2843*

Located in Woodstock, other than a portion of the Appalachian Trail, this 643-acre site is the only unit of the National Park system in Vermont. The name honors these individuals and their families who played important roles in American conservation history:

George Perkins Marsh (1801-1882): The site was the boyhood home of G. P. Marsh, one of America's first conservationists, whose 1864 book, *Man and Nature*, decried the effects of deforestation in Vermont and around the world and provided the intellectual underpinnings of the early conservation movement.

Frederick Billings (1823-1890): Later, it was the home of Billings, who returned to his native Vermont from California, transformed the property into a progressive farm and country estate, and reforested much of the land around the Mansion.

Laurance S. Rockefeller (1910-2004): Its most recent owners, Billings' granddaughter Mary Rockefeller and her husband Laurance Rockefeller, gave the property and its collections to the American people, the latest in a long history of support for National Parks by the Rockefeller family. Rockefeller received the Congressional Gold Medal in 1991 for his contributions to conservation and historic preservation.

From the USPS announcement for this issue:

The painting also is considered to be part of the Conservation movement. During the 19th century, the artists of a young America searched for a new world view and found it in the very landscapes around them. Inspired by the stunning natural beauty from across the

United States, the loose-knit Hudson River School of painters flourished from the mid-1830s to the mid-1870s and gave America its first major school of art. Americans who bought their paintings and admired them on the walls of their city homes came to believe that those scenes should be preserved for future generations, not just painted or photographed.

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At the same time, the works of authors such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson also celebrated the beauty and importance of nature.

The fine art collection at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park is one of the gems of the National Park Service and includes 500 nature and landscape paintings, many by artists associated with the Hudson River School. The collection also includes folk art, modern art, portraits and sculpture.

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Other U.S. stamps with the works of Alfred Bierstadt are pictured here.



*Valley of the Yosemite,
on a 2008 American
Treasures single.*



*The Last of the Buffalo,
part of the 1998 Four Cen-
turies of American Art is-
sue*